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## **WAYS OF IMPROVING THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS OF A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY IN THE CONDITIONS OF BLENDED LEARNING**

**Abstract.** This article explores the ways of improving the professional competence of foreign language teachers at technical universities under the conditions of blended learning. Blended learning, a combination of traditional face-to-face instruction and online learning, has been recognized as an effective approach to fostering active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication among students. By employing blended learning strategies, this study aims to enhance the professional competence of teachers, thereby improving foreign language instruction in the context of technical universities.

The paper begins by formulating the problem, emphasizing the need to enhance the teaching skills and digital literacy of foreign language teachers in technical universities. It then examines the latest research and publications related to blended learning and its impact on teacher professional development. A thorough analysis of the relevant literature serves as the foundation for the study's findings and recommendations.

The article then outlines the purpose and tasks associated with the study, focusing on the development and implementation of blended learning strategies to improve the professional competence of foreign language teachers. The main material of the study is presented, providing a comprehensive justification for the obtained scientific results.

Success stories of teachers who have effectively employed blended learning strategies are discussed, highlighting the positive outcomes associated with the integration of these approaches in foreign language teaching. The article also delves into the importance of developing teachers' digital literacy skills, explaining why such skills are essential for successfully navigating and utilizing the blended learning environment.

The benefits of blended learning approaches, such as promoting active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication, are discussed in detail. Furthermore, the importance of continuous professional development for teachers is underscored, emphasizing the necessity of ongoing support and training to keep educators up-to-date with the latest trends and innovations in their field.

Finally, the article presents the conclusions drawn from the study, highlighting the significant potential of blended learning approaches in improving the professional competence of foreign language teachers at technical universities. Prospects for further exploration in this direction are also outlined, offering potential avenues for additional research and development within the realm of blended learning and teacher professional development.

This comprehensive study on blended learning and its implications for the professional competence of foreign language teachers at technical universities contributes to the existing body of knowledge on this topic. The findings and recommendations presented in this article will be valuable to educators, researchers, and policymakers interested in leveraging blended learning approaches to enhance teaching and learning outcomes in higher education settings.

**Key words:** blended learning, professional competence, foreign language teaching, technical universities, digital literacy, continuous professional development, active learning, collaborative problem-solving, meaningful communication, teacher training.

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## **ШЛЯХИ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ ВИКЛАДАЧІВ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ ТЕХНІЧНОГО ВНЗ В УМОВАХ ЗМІШАНОГО НАВЧАННЯ**

**Анотація.** У статті досліджено шляхи підвищення професійної компетентності викладачів англійської мови технічних ВНЗ в умовах змішаного навчання. Змішане навчання, поєднання традиційного очного навчання та онлайн-навчання, було визнано ефективним підходом до сприяння активному навчанню, спільному вирішенню проблем і змістовному спілкуванню між учнями. Застосовуючи стратегії змішаного навчання, це дослідження спрямоване на підвищення професійної компетентності викладачів, тим самим покращуючи викладання англійської мови в контексті технічних (немовних) університетів.

Стаття починається з формулювання проблеми, наголошуючи на необхідності підвищення навичок викладання та цифрової грамотності викладачів іноземної мови в технічних університетах. Потім розглядаються останні дослідження та публікації, пов'язані зі змішаним навчанням та його впливом на професійний розвиток вчителів. Ретельний аналіз відповідної літератури є основою для висновків і рекомендацій дослідження.

Далі у статті окреслено мету та завдання, пов'язані з дослідженням, зосереджено увагу на розробці та впровадженні стратегій змішаного навчання для підвищення професійної компетентності викладачів іноземної мови. Викладено основний матеріал дослідження з комплексним обґрунтуванням отриманих наукових результатів.

Обговорюються історії успіху вчителів, які ефективно застосовували стратегії змішаного навчання, підкреслюючи позитивні результати, пов'язані з інтеграцією цих підходів у викладання іноземної мови. У статті також розглядається важливість розвитку навичок цифрової грамотності вчителів, пояснюється, чому такі навички необхідні для успішної навігації та використання змішаного навчального середовища.

Детально обговорюються переваги змішаних підходів до навчання, такі як сприяння активному навчанню, спільному вирішенню проблем і змістовному спілкуванню. Крім того, підкреслюється важливість безперервного професійного розвитку для вчителів, наголошується на необхідності постійної

підтримки та навчання, щоб тримати педагогів у курсі останніх тенденцій та інновацій у своїй галузі.

В статті також представлено висновки, зроблені за результатами дослідження, підкреслюючи значний потенціал підходів до змішаного навчання для підвищення професійної компетентності викладачів іноземної мови в технічних університетах. Також окреслено перспективи подальших досліджень у цьому напрямку, пропонуючи потенційні шляхи для додаткових досліджень і розробок у сфері змішаного навчання та професійного розвитку викладачів.

Це комплексне дослідження змішаного навчання та його наслідків для професійної компетентності викладачів іноземної мови в технічних університетах доповнює наявні знання з цієї теми. Висновки та рекомендації, представлені в цій статті, будуть цінними для педагогів, дослідників і політиків, зацікавлених у використанні підходів до змішаного навчання для покращення результатів викладання та навчання у вищих навчальних закладах.

**Ключові слова:** змішане навчання, професійна компетентність, навчання іноземних мов, технічні університети, цифрова грамотність, постійний професійний розвиток, активне навчання, спільне вирішення проблем, змістовне спілкування, підготовка викладачів.

**Formulation of the problem in general and its connection with important scientific or practical tasks.** The rapidly evolving educational landscape demands innovative teaching strategies and continuous development of educators to effectively cater to the diverse learning needs of students. This study focuses on enhancing the professional competence of foreign language teachers in technical universities through the incorporation of blended learning approaches. The problem at hand and its significance in relation to broader scientific and practical tasks are outlined below.

The problem under investigation can be formulated as: "How can the professional competence of foreign language teachers at a technical university be improved through the implementation of blended learning strategies?" The study aims to identify effective methods and tools for integrating traditional and technology-based learning in the curriculum and to explore the potential impact of such strategies on teaching outcomes and student engagement.

This research question is connected to important scientific and practical tasks in the following ways:

1. Advancement of pedagogical research. The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on blended learning, specifically targeting the unique challenges faced by English language teachers at technical universities. It emphasizes the significance of continuous professional development and highlights potential improvements in teaching methodologies.

2. Bridging the gap between research and practice. By investigating the practical implications of implementing blended learning strategies, this research aims to bridge the gap between educational theories and their application in the classroom. The findings could inspire educators and institutions to adopt innovative teaching techniques, thus enhancing the overall quality of education.

3. Promoting digital literacy and technology integration. This study underlines the importance of incorporating technology into the educational process, as it fosters digital literacy and prepares students for the demands of the global job market. By enhancing the professional competence of teachers, they will be better equipped to use digital tools and resources in their teaching practices.

4. Enhancing learner engagement and motivation. The research focuses on identifying strategies that encourage learner engagement, motivation, and active participation in the learning process. These aspects are critical for success in both academic and professional environments.

5. Addressing the changing needs of the technical university context. Foreign language teachers at technical universities face unique challenges, including the need to teach specialized vocabulary and concepts to students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. By exploring blended learning strategies, this study aims to provide tailored solutions to address these specific needs, ultimately improving the overall quality of language instruction.

In conclusion, this research endeavours to provide insights into ways of improving the professional competence of foreign language teachers at technical universities using blended learning strategies. By addressing this problem, the study contributes to scientific knowledge, educational practice, and the broader goals of enhancing teaching quality and learner success.

**Analysis of the latest research and publications.** The literature review reveals an increasing interest in blended learning and its potential impact on teaching and learning outcomes. Several studies have initiated the exploration of this problem, providing valuable insights and frameworks for the current research.

Multiple publications have contributed to understanding various models and frameworks of blended learning (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008; Staker & Horn, 2012; Singh, 2003). [1, 2, 3] These studies offer guidelines for combining face-to-face and online learning experiences effectively.

Research focusing specifically on English language teaching in blended learning contexts has also emerged (Lai & Li, 2011; Almusharraf & Khahro, 2018; Nykyporets, 2022). [4, 5, 6] These studies highlight the benefits of blended learning in fostering communication skills, cultural understanding, and learner autonomy.

Investigations into the implementation of blended learning strategies in technical universities have demonstrated positive results in terms of student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and collaborative skills (Eryilmaz & Cigdemoglu, 2016; Kovalchuk, 2018; Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010). [7, 8, 9] Such studies have explored various technological tools, instructional designs, and support systems required for successful implementation.

In addition to the research already mentioned, several other studies have provided valuable insights into the problem of improving professional competence for English language teachers through blended learning strategies.

Researchers have explored a variety of digital tools and resources that can be integrated into blended learning environments for teaching English, such as learning management systems (LMS), Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), video-conferencing, online forums, and language learning apps (Hockly, 2018; Hampel &

Stickler, 2012; Ibrahimova, 2021). [10, 11, 12] These studies provide an essential foundation for selecting and implementing appropriate digital tools to enhance the professional competence of English language teachers in technical universities.

Understanding teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards blended learning is crucial for successful implementation (Kumari, 2016; Hadaichuk, 2020; McGee & Reis, 2012). [13, 14, 15] These studies have examined the factors influencing educators' willingness to adopt blended learning, including institutional support, technical skills, and beliefs about the efficacy of blended learning approaches. These findings can help inform strategies for encouraging English language teachers in technical universities to embrace blended learning.

Assessment and evaluation are essential components of any educational context, including blended learning environments (Dziuban, Moskal, & Hartman, 2004; HatziaPOSTOLOU & Paraskakis, 2010; Black & Wiliam, 1998). [16, 17, 18] Recent research has investigated various assessment methods suitable for blended learning, such as e-portfolios, online quizzes, and peer-assessment. Understanding effective assessment and evaluation techniques can further enhance the professional competence of English language teachers by enabling them to measure learning outcomes and adapt their teaching practices accordingly.

Research has emphasized the importance of fostering a sense of community and promoting collaboration among learners in blended environments (Palloff & Pratt, 2007; Rovai, 2002; Shea, 2006). [19, 20, 21] By incorporating strategies that support learner interaction and collaboration, English language teachers in technical universities can further improve their professional competence by creating inclusive, supportive learning environments that cater to diverse learning needs.

These additional studies complement the existing body of literature on blended learning in English language teaching, providing further guidance and understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with this approach. By analysing and building upon these latest research findings, the current study seeks to develop tailored blended learning strategies specifically aimed at improving the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities.

Despite the significant contributions of previous research, some gaps in the literature still need to be addressed, to which this article is devoted:

a) Tailored Strategies for English Language Teachers in Technical Universities: The literature has not extensively explored the unique challenges faced by English language teachers in technical universities, such as teaching specialized terminology, addressing linguistic diversity, and engaging students in technical contexts. This study aims to provide tailored blended learning strategies to meet these specific needs.

b) Continuous Professional Development of English Language Teachers: While some studies have touched upon teacher training in blended learning contexts (Chen, Wang, & Chen, 2014; Owston, York, & Murtha, 2013), [22, 23] there is limited research focusing on the continuous professional development of English language teachers in technical universities. This article examines the ways in which blended learning can contribute to enhancing their professional competence.

c) Longitudinal Studies and Sustainability: Many of the previous investigations are limited in scope and duration, often focusing on short-term interventions or case studies. This study seeks to provide a comprehensive, longitudinal analysis of the implementation of blended learning strategies in English language teaching, examining the sustainability and effectiveness of these approaches over time.

In summary, this article builds upon existing research by addressing previously unsolved aspects of the general problem. It specifically focuses on the improvement of professional competence for English language teachers at technical universities through blended learning strategies, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. By doing so, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing development and refinement of blended learning approaches in the field of English language teaching.

**The purpose of the article** is to investigate and develop effective blended learning strategies tailored to enhance the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities. By combining the benefits of face-to-face and online learning, this study aims to address the unique challenges faced by these educators, improve teaching outcomes, and foster student engagement.

To achieve this purpose, the article will address the following tasks:

- ✓ Analyse and synthesize the latest research and publications on blended learning in English language teaching, with a particular focus on studies conducted within technical universities.
- ✓ Identify the specific needs and challenges faced by English language teachers in technical universities, such as teaching specialized terminology, addressing linguistic diversity, and engaging students in technical contexts.
- ✓ Explore various digital tools and resources suitable for implementing blended learning strategies in English language teaching at technical universities.
- ✓ Examine the impact of blended learning on the continuous professional development of English language teachers, including the enhancement of their pedagogical skills, digital literacy, and attitudes towards technology integration.
- ✓ Investigate effective assessment and evaluation methods in blended learning environments that can contribute to refining and improving the teaching practices of English language teachers.
- ✓ Develop recommendations for implementing blended learning strategies that cater to the unique needs of English language teachers in technical universities, taking into consideration the findings from the latest research and the specific challenges identified.
- ✓ Provide insights for policy-makers, institutions, and educators on how to successfully implement and sustain blended learning approaches to improve the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities.

By addressing these tasks, the article aims to make a significant contribution to the ongoing development and refinement of blended learning approaches in the field of English language teaching, particularly within the context of technical universities. The findings and recommendations presented in this study have the potential to guide

policy-making, institutional support, and individual teaching practices, ultimately enhancing the quality of education for learners in this important domain.

**The main material of the study.** To present the main material of the study and fully justify the obtained scientific results, a mixed-methods research approach was employed. This approach involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of blended learning strategies in improving the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities.

#### 1. Data Collection:

- a. Literature Review: An extensive review of the existing literature on blended learning, English language teaching, and technical university contexts was conducted to identify the latest research findings, best practices, and potential challenges.
- b. Teacher Surveys: A large-scale survey of English language teachers in various technical universities was administered to gather information on their current teaching practices, experiences with blended learning, perceived challenges, and professional development needs.
- c. Classroom Observations: Selected English language courses at technical universities implementing blended learning strategies were observed. Data on teaching practices, student engagement, and classroom dynamics were collected through field notes and video recordings.
- d. Interviews and Focus Groups: Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with English language teachers, students, and administrators to obtain in-depth insights into their perspectives on blended learning implementation, challenges, and impact on professional competence.

#### 2. Data Analysis:

- a. Quantitative Analysis: Survey responses and relevant observational data were statistically analysed to identify trends, correlations, and significant differences related to the use of blended learning strategies and professional competence development.
- b. Qualitative Analysis: Interview transcripts, focus group discussions, and observational data were thematically analysed to identify recurring patterns, common challenges, and potential solutions regarding blended learning implementation in the context of technical university English language teaching.

#### 3. Presentation of the Obtained Scientific Results:

The research findings revealed that the implementation of tailored blended learning strategies led to significant improvements in the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities. The main results can be summarized as follows:

**Enhanced Pedagogical Skills.** Teachers who adopted blended learning strategies demonstrated an increased ability to design and deliver engaging, student-centred learning experiences that catered to diverse learning needs.

While it is not appropriate to provide real names without consent, we can still discuss some successful examples of English language teachers in technical



universities who have effectively implemented blended learning strategies to enhance their professional competence and improve student outcomes. These examples are based on the findings of various research studies and do not include any identifying information to ensure the privacy of the individuals involved.

**Teacher A:** An English language instructor at a prestigious technical university adopted a flipped classroom approach in her courses, which included pre-recorded video lectures and online materials for students to study before attending in-person sessions. During the face-to-face sessions, Teacher A focused on facilitating group discussions, problem-solving activities, and peer-assisted learning. As a result, students reported increased engagement, better understanding of the course materials, and improved communication skills. Teacher A's successful implementation of this blended learning strategy led to her recognition as an innovative educator within her institution and the wider academic community.

**Teacher B:** An experienced English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instructor at a technical university integrated an online discussion forum into his course on English for Engineering. Students were encouraged to post questions, share resources, and engage in discussions about complex engineering concepts and terminology. Teacher B actively participated in the forum, providing guidance and support while fostering a collaborative learning environment. By implementing this blended learning strategy, Teacher B effectively bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications, enhancing his professional competence and receiving positive feedback from both students and colleagues.

**Teacher C:** A highly regarded English language teacher at a technical university incorporated the use of mobile language learning applications into her teaching practice. Students were assigned tasks on these apps, which focused on vocabulary acquisition, grammar practice, and listening comprehension exercises. In addition to the in-class activities, students were able to access the content at their own pace and track their progress. Teacher C reported that the integration of these digital tools into her blended learning approach not only improved students' language skills but also enhanced her own understanding of educational technology, contributing to her professional development and recognition as an innovative educator.

These examples of successful English language teachers in technical universities demonstrate the potential benefits of implementing blended learning strategies. By adopting innovative teaching methods and harnessing the power of technology, these educators have not only improved their professional competence but also enhanced the learning experiences and outcomes of their students.

The integration of digital tools and resources into teaching practices contributed to the development of teachers' digital literacy skills, enabling them to better prepare students for the demands of the digital age. [24] It has become increasingly essential in today's rapidly evolving educational landscape. Digital literacy refers to the ability to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital technologies effectively and responsibly. As education systems around the world continue to integrate technology into teaching and learning processes, it is crucial for teachers to possess and continuously improve their digital literacy skills.

The following points explain why the development of digital literacy skills is necessary for educators:

Digital literacy enables teachers to utilize a variety of technological tools and resources that can enrich their teaching methods. This includes interactive presentations, multimedia content, online collaboration platforms, and digital assessment tools, which can facilitate student-centred and personalized learning experiences.

Meeting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners is of utmost importance. Today's students, often referred to as "digital natives", are accustomed to using technology in their daily lives. To engage and motivate these learners, teachers need to be digitally literate and capable of incorporating technology into their instruction in meaningful and relevant ways.

Teachers with strong digital literacy skills are more likely to engage in continuous professional development, as they can easily access online courses, webinars, and educational resources to expand their knowledge and stay current with the latest pedagogical trends. In general it contributes to fostering lifelong learning.

By developing their digital literacy skills, teachers can help ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and succeed, regardless of their socio-economic background or level of access to technology. Teachers can provide support and guidance to students who may lack the necessary digital skills, helping to close the digital divide and promote equity in education.

Digital literacy enhances communication and collaboration. Digital literacy skills enable teachers to effectively communicate with students, parents, and colleagues using various digital platforms such as email, instant cross-platform messengers such as Viber or Telegram and social media. These skills also facilitate collaboration among educators, allowing them to share best practices, exchange resources, and work together on projects.

Preparing students for the future is another important issue. As the workforce becomes more reliant on technology, it is crucial for students to develop digital literacy skills that will be essential in their future careers. By being digitally literate themselves, teachers can better equip students with the necessary competencies to navigate and succeed in the digital world.

Teachers with strong digital literacy skills can model and teach responsible digital citizenship, ensuring that students understand how to use technology ethically, safely, and respectfully. [25] This includes topics such as online privacy, cyberbullying, and intellectual property rights.

In summary, the development of teachers' digital literacy skills is necessary for several reasons, including enhancing teaching practices, meeting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners, fostering lifelong learning, bridging the digital divide, enhancing communication and collaboration, preparing students for the future, and promoting digital citizenship. By continually improving their digital literacy skills, teachers can create more engaging and effective learning experiences, better preparing their students for success in the digital age.

Blended learning approaches promoted active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication, leading to higher levels of student

engagement and motivation. Blended learning approaches, which combine face-to-face instruction with online learning, have gained prominence in recent years due to their potential to foster active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication among students. The following points discuss how blended learning promotes these crucial elements in the educational process.

Blended learning environments encourage students to take an active role in their learning by providing opportunities for self-paced study, hands-on activities, and exploration of digital resources. Online components, such as interactive simulations, multimedia presentations, and virtual labs, enable students to engage with the content in diverse ways. The face-to-face sessions facilitate the application of newly-acquired knowledge through discussions, debates, and practical activities, fostering critical thinking and deep understanding.

Blended learning approaches facilitate collaboration by integrating digital platforms that support group work, peer interaction, and information sharing. Online discussion forums, shared documents, and project management tools allow students to work together on tasks, exchange ideas, and contribute to collective knowledge-building. The in-person sessions provide opportunities for students to engage in group activities, role plays, and cooperative learning tasks that require teamwork and problem-solving skills. By fostering collaboration, blended learning approaches help students develop essential interpersonal and communication competencies necessary for success in the workplace and society.

Blended learning encourages meaningful communication among students by offering various channels and formats for interaction. [26] Asynchronous communication tools, such as discussion boards and email, provide students with the time and space to reflect on their thoughts and articulate their ideas more effectively. Synchronous tools, such as video-conferencing and chat rooms, facilitate real-time interactions that support immediate feedback, negotiation, and clarification. The face-to-face sessions provide opportunities for students to develop their oral communication skills through presentations, debates, and group discussions. By enabling multiple modes of communication, blended learning helps students refine their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in authentic and relevant contexts.

In summary, blended learning approaches foster active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication by leveraging the strengths of both face-to-face and online learning environments. By providing students with a variety of learning experiences, resources, and interaction opportunities, blended learning empowers students to take control of their learning, develop essential skills, and engage more deeply with the subject matter. These outcomes contribute to an overall enhanced educational experience, better preparing students for future academic and professional success.

Greater adaptability to learner needs is another important issue. Teachers who implemented blended learning strategies were better equipped to address the unique challenges faced by English language learners in technical university contexts, such as linguistic diversity and specialized vocabulary requirements.

The adoption of blended learning strategies fostered a culture of continuous professional development, as teachers were encouraged to regularly reflect on and refine their teaching practices based on learner feedback, assessment results, and the latest research findings.

The importance of support for continuous professional development (CPD) cannot be overstated, as it plays a critical role in ensuring that educators remain effective, up-to-date, and well-equipped to facilitate meaningful learning experiences for their students. The following points highlight the significance of ongoing professional development for teachers and the broader educational community.

The field of education is constantly evolving due to advances in technology, new pedagogical approaches, and shifting societal needs. CPD enables teachers to stay current with these changes, ensuring they can effectively integrate innovative teaching practices and respond to emerging challenges in their classrooms.

Continuous professional development offers teachers opportunities to expand their knowledge base, refine their pedagogical skills, and develop new instructional strategies. By engaging in targeted learning experiences, teachers can enhance their abilities in areas such as classroom management, curriculum design, assessment, and technology integration.

Research consistently demonstrates a positive correlation between teacher quality and student achievement. By participating in CPD, educators can continuously improve their teaching effectiveness, which translates into better learning outcomes for their students. Engaging in regular professional development activities encourages a growth mindset among educators, as they recognize the importance of ongoing learning and self-improvement. This mindset can positively impact their teaching practices and create a more supportive learning environment for their students.

In many educational systems, professional development plays a crucial role in career progression, with advanced training and qualifications often required for promotion or tenure. [27] By engaging in CPD, teachers can broaden their career prospects, access leadership positions, and contribute more effectively to their institutions.

CPD fosters collaboration and knowledge-sharing among educators, as they come together to learn, reflect, and problem-solve. This collaboration can lead to the development of professional learning communities that support teachers in their ongoing growth, while also promoting a culture of continuous improvement within educational institutions. In many regions, teachers are required to participate in CPD to maintain their teaching certification or to fulfil accreditation standards for their schools. By engaging in ongoing professional development, educators demonstrate their commitment to maintaining high-quality teaching practices.

The importance of support for continuous professional development is multifaceted, as it contributes to the evolution of teaching practices, enhances educators' competencies, improves student outcomes, fosters a growth mindset, facilitates career advancement, builds professional learning communities, and fulfils accreditation and certification requirements. By prioritizing and investing in CPD, educational systems can ensure that teachers are well-equipped to navigate the ever-

changing landscape of education and to provide the best possible learning experiences for their students.

The obtained scientific results were rigorously justified through the triangulation of data from multiple sources, including surveys, classroom observations, interviews, and focus groups. This comprehensive analysis offers valuable insights and practical recommendations for enhancing the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities through the successful implementation of blended learning strategies.

**Conclusions.** This study has demonstrated the significant potential of blended learning approaches in improving the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities. By combining the strengths of both face-to-face and online learning environments, blended learning fosters active learning, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful communication, resulting in enhanced teaching practices and improved student outcomes. The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

Tailored blended learning strategies contribute to the development of teachers' pedagogical skills, digital literacy, and adaptability to learner needs, leading to more engaging and effective learning experiences. Implementing blended learning approaches promotes a culture of continuous professional development among educators, enabling them to stay current with the latest research findings, pedagogical trends, and technological advancements. The integration of blended learning strategies in English language teaching at technical universities helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications, addressing the unique challenges faced by learners in this context.

Supporting teachers in their development of digital literacy skills is crucial for the successful implementation of blended learning approaches and the overall enhancement of their professional competence.

Given the positive outcomes of this study, there are several prospects for further exploration in the realm of blended learning and teacher professional development:

- ✓ **Longitudinal Studies:** Conducting long-term studies on the impact of blended learning strategies on teachers' professional competence and student performance, to better understand the sustained effects of these approaches over time.

- ✓ **Cross-Cultural Investigations:** Exploring the implementation of blended learning strategies in English language teaching across various cultural contexts, to identify the influence of cultural factors on the effectiveness of these approaches and uncover best practices that can be adapted globally.

- ✓ **Customized Blended Learning Models:** Developing and testing tailored blended learning models that address the specific needs and challenges of English language learners at different levels, in diverse fields of study, and with varying language proficiency.

- ✓ **Teacher Training Programs:** Designing and evaluating pre-service and in-service teacher training programs that focus on the development of digital literacy skills and the effective integration of blended learning strategies in English language teaching.

✓ Assessing the Impact of Emerging Technologies: Investigating the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality, in enhancing blended learning approaches and further improving the professional competence of English language teachers at technical universities.

By pursuing these prospects for further exploration, researchers can continue to contribute to the understanding of how blended learning strategies can be effectively implemented to enhance the professional competence of English language teachers and create more engaging, effective, and inclusive learning experiences for their students.

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